

[Pence Takes On Libya, Spending In Town Hall Meeting](#)

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Greensburg — U.S. Rep Mike Pence (R-6th District) made a visit to the city Wednesday to hold a town hall meeting.

Before a packed crowd at the Greensburg Community Learning Center, Pence explained his intentions to bring news from Washington and take the pulse of his constituents so he could carry their concerns and desires back to the House floor.

"I really believe town hall meetings are every bit as much an opportunity for citizens to stand up among their neighbors and tell elected officials what they think about what's happening at home or abroad," Pence said.

During his introductory talk, those were the two themes: Home and abroad. Pence discussed the recent incursion into the conflict being fought in Libya. He noted he was dismayed by President Barack Obama's decision to seek the consent of the United Nations rather than Congress to enter the fray. A member of the Foreign Affairs Committee for nearly eight years, Pence said he has never traveled to Libya, for specific reasons.

"I have not been to Libya on purpose. I know we normalized relations with Moammar Gadhafi a number of years ago, and I've had a number of opportunities to pass through there and have a meeting with him and I had absolutely no interest in doing that. Pan Am was the reason. I don't

think Libya was ever held fully accountable for their involvement in that tragedy over Scotland, but now we see Moammar Gadhafi revealed in the fullness of his violence," Pence said.

He noted the situation in Libya was being monitored closely and noted recent intelligence released by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton hinted that Gaddafi may be ready to flee the country. He said he welcomed that departure but questions what the next step would be, wondering openly who the rebels are and what their initiatives may be, information he would need before pledging support. Ultimately, his main concern would be for the military and ensuring they had the resources to do their jobs.

He switched the talk back home addressing what he felt are the two biggest domestic issues currently being debated on the House floor: Job creation and fiscal spending.

"It's a jump ball right now between jobs and spending," he said. "I think everything you hear coming out of Congress is going to continue to focus on what is necessary to get the economy moving again and begin to create jobs and increase the disposable income here in Indiana and around the country, but also to get federal spending under control," he said.

Pence noted he has been pushing hard on Capitol Hill for "fiscal sanity" in the hopes that wrangling in spending on the federal level will help encourage spending in the private sector to stimulate jobs. For Pence, the rising national debt and federal spending has become less of an economic issue and more one of morality.

"What we're doing to these kids is a moral issue. I mean \$14 trillion in national debt that will double if the president's budget is put into place. It will be twice the size of our economy, the national debt, by the end of the year," Pence said. "No one wants to shutdown the government in a couple of weeks, but if we don't take decisive action to change the fiscal direction of this country, we're going to shut down the future of these kids."

He noted the economy is slowly recovering, but too slowly. He accused the actions of the Obama administration have been basing their economic stimulation through borrowing and spending. He said the key is to keep more money on the farm and in the pockets of Americans and open up energy reserves and untapped natural resources to spur job growth and relax reliance on foreign oil.

Ultimately, he said he believes controlling federal spending and creating jobs were linked.

"Until we put our fiscal house in order, you're going to continue to see a lot of the business community be hesitant about spending the money they have," Pence said. "Whether you're running a lemonade stand in Greensburg, Indiana, or Columbus or a multi-national corporation based in Connecticut, if government keeps spending the way they're spending, you got to think you're eventually going to get the bill from that. And you're going to hold off in expanding, but if government starts showing some discipline, maybe we'll move forward."

Before his speech, Pence took the time to thank everyone for attending, including some young people who skipped school for the event. He also applauded the sacrifices of Mayor Gary Herbert, noting he was "a local hero," as well as the efforts of Jim Cummings and the Greensburg Community Learning Center, which has continued to grow.

"Jim loves this community and has a passion for it and its contagious," Pence said applauding the efforts of the Learning Center to educate adults within the community.